

## VA Bias Exercise “When the wind blows!”

**Object:** To have participants identify and recognize the things they like and dislike by responding to expressions of likes and dislikes by others. Please treat this exercise with as much humor as possible.

**Set Up:** Have all the participants form a large circle within a room. This room should be cleared of furniture or anything that would obstruct movement within the circle. Have each participant take a sheet of paper and tape the paper to the floor, securely. Once everyone has taped their sheet of paper down, have them stand on the paper.

The Facilitator should stand in the middle of the circle, without any paper taped down and explain the rules of the exercise:

This game is like musical chairs. The object is to not be left without a piece of paper to stand on. If you are, then you must come to the center of the circle and do what I’m about to do. The person in the middle of the circle says the expression, “When the wind blows I like \_\_\_\_\_” or “When the wind blows I don’t like \_\_\_\_\_”, filling in the blanks according to their preference (example: “When the wind blows I like reading a book”). If what the person expresses applies to you then you are to move off the paper you’re standing on and go to another piece of paper. You cannot go to sheets of paper that are next to the one you are currently on. Only one person can occupy a sheet of paper. That’s it!

The movement of this exercise should go on a minimum of 10 minutes, allowing at least 7-9 exchanges of expressions. There should be even more exchanges, if time allows and the participants are enthused.

When the Facilitator feels that most people have participated and have been in the circle, then the facilitator should allow himself or herself to end up in the circle and call the movement over.

**Processing:** The Facilitator should thank everyone for participating and then start making some observations about the group:

Where the expressions more frequently likes or dislikes? Does this represent a more positive group or negative group?

Poll the group for the number of times an individual moved. Who moved more than 5 times? 7 or more? Who moved less than 3 times? Does this mean you liked or disliked a

lot or a little. Was the group competitive? (were they aggressively reaching the pieces of paper?) Why you were not allowed to move to the paper next to you? (it got you out of your comfort zone).

As UVAs, one will encounter victims who will push your buttons for what you like or dislike. Everyone has biases and preferences. The key is to be aware of your biases and preferences before you encounter a victim. You may consider the need or desire to stretch yourself beyond your normal limits. These things you would want to discuss with the SARC before they become an issue working with a victim.